Socialists FBI Target For Years

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The FBI attempted to disrupt the Socialist Workers party by sabotaging political campaigns, sowing racial dissension, and mailing fake letters to discredit members, according to newly disclosed FBI documents.

From New Jersey to Colorado to California, FBI agents monitored the activities of local party members and proposed ways of disrupting their political and personal lives.

The documents indicate that J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI director during the 10-year campaign which ended in 1971, approved the specific operations and that high FBI officials later judged the tactics successful.

AMONG THE PROJECTS was a covert attempt to induce the Boy Scouts to oust a New Jersey scoutmaster because his wife belonged to the Socialist Workers.

Two school board candidates in Denver in 1965 were the targets of anonymous letters sent to the school board president, falsely signed "a concerned mother." They lost the election.

An anonymous letter, signed "Disappointed," was sent to a black candidate for mayor of San Francisco in 1963 in an effort to discredit supporters who were party members.

Those are only a few of the incidents described in more than 3,000 pages of documents which the FBI was forced by a court order to turn over to the Socialist Workers.

THE PARTY HAS FILED a $27 million damage suit against the FBI in a New York federal district court.

Party officials and their lawyers from the Political Rights Defense Fund were planning to make the documents public today. Copies of some of them were obtained last night.

The documents provide the fullest description so far made public of the tactics employed by the FBI in a seven-pronged counterintelligence program (Cointelpro) against the Socialist Workers, the New Left, black militants, the Ku Klux Klan and foreign espionage agents.

Former Atty. Gen. William B. Saxbe called some of the tactics "abhorrent in a free society."

A SPOKESMAN for the defense fund, Catherine Perkus, said the files were turned over yesterday to the Senate select committee headed by Frank Church, D-Idaho, which is investigating intelligence operations of the CIA and FBI.

She said party officials suspect that the FBI continues to engage in similar disruptive tactics, though claiming that the former Cointelpro operation ended in April 1971.